

Grade 12 College Planning Checklist

GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL

- Do a final credit check! See your school counselor to make sure you have all your credits to graduate.

CREATE SHORT LIST OF COLLEGES

- Research potential college to apply to. Here is a good website to help you do this:
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
- Make a master calendar and include: test dates; application due dates; and financial aid deadlines.

CONFIRM ELIGIBILITY FOR “MICKINNEY-VENTO”

- McKinney-Vento is a law that protects the rights of homeless students to get to, stay in, and be successful in school. Your school cannot serve you if they don't know who you are. Make sure your counselor knows your housing situation, this will entitle you to receive additional services and have priority to college access programs such as Upward Bound, Talent Search and Gear-Up.

COMPILE IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- College and financial aid applications will need biographical data from you and your legal guardian. Having the following information in one place will make completing the application a much smoother process: social security number, date of birth, financial statements such as tax returns, and citizenship documents.

APPLY

- Take or retake SAT or other college admissions test in October/November. See your counselor for SAT waiver.
- Aim to submit college applications **no later than Thanksgiving!** Talk to your school counselor by middle of September to request CUNY and SUNY application waivers. Waivers are very limited and they go fast!

FINANCIAL AID

- Apply for Federal Student Aid. FAFSA application **as soon as possible after January**

1st. FAFSA application is used to apply for federal, state, and college sponsored financial aid.

- Unaccompanied Homeless Youth can file as independent Students for FAFSA. Unaccompanied youth are student who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Filing independent status for FAFSA allows for the students' financial aid packages to be calculated based on student income, and eliminates the need for the signature and financial information of a parent or guardian for FAFSA application. Speak to your counselor if you have questions, and visit <http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/higher-ed> for more information.

AFTER YOU APPLY

- You should begin receiving acceptance letters and financial aid offers by late March.
- By May, decide what college you want to attend. Before you decide, speak to your school counselor to compare financial aid award offers from the colleges.
- Once you have decided, send the college a nonrefundable deposit if they require one. Call the college to see if it is possible to get your deposit waived.
- Over the summer make sure you read emails and other correspondence from the college. Between April and September look out for information about housing, orientation, placement tests, registration, and other steps you need to take before you enroll.
- Once on campus, meet with your academic advisor. Your advisor will help you register for classes and inform you on what types of supports and services are available on campus to help you succeed.